

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
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FM AMEMBASSY DAKAR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4538
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY TUNIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAKAR 4655

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, SG, TS
SUBJECT: TUNISIAN PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICIAL VISIT TO SENEGAL

REF: (A) DAKAR 4623 (NOTAL), (B) DAKAR 3599 (NOTAL), (C)
TUNIS 3246 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY:DURING TUNISIAN PRIME MINISTER NOUIRA'S OFFICIAL
VISIT TO SENEGAL JUNE 12-15, SOME MUTUAL APPREHENSIONS WERE
CLEARED UP. SENGHOR EXPLAINED THAT HE HAD NO INTENTION OF
BECOMING INVOLVED WITH TUNISIAN POLITICS BY RECEIVING
OPPOSITION LEADER MESTIRI. NOUIRA ASSURED SENGHOR THAT
THERE IS NO PROSPECT FOR A POLITICAL UNION BETWEEN TUNISIA
AND LIBYA. OFFICIAL VISIT MARKED BEGINNING OF MODEST
EXPANSION OF TUNISIAN ACTIVITIES IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA.
END SUMMARY.

1. PRIME MINISTER NOUIRA HAD TWO CONVERSATIONS WITH
PRESIDENT SENGHOR DURING HIS OFFICIAL VISIT TO SENEGAL
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JUNE 12-15. DURING FIRST CONVERSATION, NOUIRA ASKED
SENGHOR TO GIVE HIM FULL BACKGROUND TO LATTER'S MEETING
WITH TUNISIAN OPPOSITION POLITICIAN AHMED MESTIRI IN
DAKAR IN EARLY MAY. (I HAD WARNED SENGHOR OF TUNISIAN
UNHAPPINESS DURING OUR CONVERSATION OF MAY 13.)
SENGHOR SAID THAT HE HAD BEEN APPROACHED BY JEUNE
AFRIQUE PUBLISHER BECHIR BEN YAMID WHO HAD COMPLAINED

THAT THE YOUNGER GENERATION OF POLITICALLY ACTIVE TUNISIANS IS BECOMING DISILLUSIONED WITH THE CURRENT ESTABLISHMENT. A COMMUNICATIONS GAP WAS DEVELOPING. SENGHOR ASKED BEN YAMID WHAT HE MIGHT DO TO HELP. BEN YAMID SAID SENGHOR COULD HELP BY AGREEING TO RECEIVE MESTIRI IN DAKAR. SENGHOR AGREED. SENGHOR ASSURED NOUIRA THAT HE HAD NOT SPECIFICALLY INVITED MESTIRI, AND THAT HE HAD NO INTENTION OF FOLLOWING UP ON THE MEETING. SENGHOR SAID THAT HE HAD CHECKED WITH SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT WILLY BRANDT WHO ASSURED HIM THAT THE ONE-PARTY STATE ON THE TUNISIAN MODEL IS PERFECTLY COMPATIBLE WITH SOCIALISM SINCE THERE IS DEMOCRACY WITHIN THE SINGLE PARTY. THIS EXPLANATION APPARENTLY SATISFIED NOUIRA, AND THE ISSUE IS NOW CLOSED.

2. ON THE SUBJECT OF RELATIONS WITH LIBYA, SENGHOR EXPRESSED CONCERN AT REPORTS THAT TUNISIA WAS AGAIN CONSIDERING A POLITICAL UNION WITH THE KADHAFFI REGIME. SENGHOR HAD BEGUN TO SOFTEN HIS NEGATIVE VIEW OF LIBYA IN APRIL AND MAY WHEN IT LOOKED AS IF KADHAFFI MIGHT BE WILLING TO BEFRIEND OULD DADDAH OF MAURITANIA IN THE WESTERN SAHARA DISPUTE. BUT WHEN KADHAFFI SUBSEQUENTLY EXPRESSED SOLIDARITY WITH POLISARIO, PRE-SUMBALY IN ORDER TO PUNISH THE FRENCH FOR THE CHAD INTERVENTION, SENGHOR AGAIN RELEGATED LIBYA TO THE CONFIDENTIAL

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ENEMIES LIST. NOUIRA ASSURED SENGHOR THAT A POLITICAL UNION AMONG TUNISIA, LIBYA AND ALGERIA IS NOT IN THE CARDS. HE SAID THAT TUNISIANS FAVOR MAGHREB UNITY IN PRINCIPLE, BUT THIS IS NOT POSSIBLE AS LONG AS THERE IS SUCH A WIDE DIFFERENCE OF POLITICAL AND IDEOLOGICAL OUTLOOK AMONG THE GOVERNMENTS INVOLVED.

3. ON ALL OTHER SUBJECTS DISCUSSED, THERE APPEARED TO BE AGREEMENT BETWEEN TUNISIA AND SENEGAL. ON THE MIDDLE EAST, THE ANALYSIS WAS IDENTICAL. BOTH SIDES APPROVED SADAT'S JERUSALEM INITIATIVE, AND BOTH FEEL THAT ISRAEL UNDER BEGIN IS THE GUILTY PARTY FOR TAKING A HARD LINE ON THE FATE OF THE PALESTINIANS.

4. ON AFRICA, THE TUNISIANS WENT ALONG WITH THE SENEGALESE ANALYSIS THAT OUTSIDE MILITARY INTERVENTION (READ SOVIETS AND CUBANS) IS DESTABILIZING AND A THREAT TO AFRICAN INDEPENDENCE. IN THIS CONTEXT, NOUIRA INFORMED SENGHOR AND PRIME MINISTER ABDOU DIOUF THAT HIS VISIT MARKS THE BEGINNING OF EXPANDED TUNISIAN ACTIVITY IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA. TUNISIA IS OPENING NEW EMBASSIES IN NOUAKCHOTT AND LAGOS, AND TUNISIAN

AMBASSADOR TO SENEGAL, HACHEMI OUANES IS BEING BROUGHT
BACK TO TUNIS TO HEAD UP THE AFRICAN DEPARTMENT IN THE
FOREIGN MINISTRY.

5. COMMENT: SENGHOR CONSIDERS TUNISIA TO BE A KEY
ELEMENT IN HIS EFFORT TO ORGANIZE A POLITICAL ALLIANCE
AMONG THE MODERATE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC REGIMES OF AFRICA.
IN THIS CONTEXT, HE WAS VERY PLEASED WITH THE NOUIRA
VISIT. ON THE OTHER HAND, WE DO NOT SEE A RECIPROCAL
ENTHUSIASM FOR SUCH A NEW ALLIANCE ON THE PART OF THE
OTHER GOVERNMENTS CONCERNED. WE WILL SEE WHO SHOWS UP
AT THE FIRST MEETING OF THE INTERAFRICAN SOCIALISTS
SCHEDULED FOR LATER THIS YEAR.

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